

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 580

By Burchett

A RESOLUTION congratulating the members of Temple Beth El upon their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary at their present location.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and remarkable faith, strive to enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, the good people of Temple Beth El, the oldest Jewish congregation in East Tennessee, comprise one such religious institution, and they will observe their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in their present location on Kingston Pike this year; and

WHEREAS, the Kingston Pike location does not represent the beginning of this esteemed congregation, which was founded in 1864 and became a member of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in 1875; for eighty years, the congregation's home was in downtown Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, Temple Beth El's story has sad beginnings; Joseph M. Schwab, a young Jewish man, was killed during the Civil War and his father had no place to bury him, as the Jewish community in Knoxville at the time had no burial ground; and

WHEREAS, an offer of a parcel of land by another Jewish member of the community, Solomon Lyons, provided burial ground in the form of a lot measuring 50 feet by 150 feet in what was then known as Shieldstown; this cemetery is still maintained by the Cemetery Committee of Temple Beth El, and services are routinely conducted there during High Holy Days; and

WHEREAS, on March 3, 1868, the Hebrew Benevolent Association, as the congregation was then known, was incorporated; in 1877, the name of the congregation was changed to Temple Beth El, but the group was not incorporated under that name until 1893; and

WHEREAS, the congregation moved to its downtown location in 1914, and in 1922, Rabbi Jerome Mark became Temple Beth El's first resident rabbi; in 1930, a Jewish Community Center was erected adjacent to the Temple through the generous gift of Temple member Max Arnstein; and

WHEREAS, on September 28<sup>th</sup> through 30<sup>th</sup> of 2007, Temple Beth El is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Kingston Pike with a gala weekend; Dr. Harold Winston, who was a member of the location committee that found the place to build the new home for Reform Judaism in Knoxville, has been appointed Honorary Chair; and

WHEREAS, the members of this remarkable congregation will surely enjoy a weekend of reaffirmation of their commitment to Judaism and Temple Beth El; and

WHEREAS, Temple Beth El has significantly contributed to the social, cultural, and spiritual vitality of the Knoxville community and the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby congratulate the members of Temple Beth El upon their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary at their present location, and we thank the members of this venerable congregation for their faithful service to God, their community, and the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.